

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Commercial Pilot Academy Limited trading as Flight Training Manawatu

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 5 May 2016

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Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO: Commercial Pilot Academy Limited (CPA) formerly

Flight Training Manawatu

Type: Private training establishment (PTE)

First registered: 14 August 2015

Location: Feilding Aerodrome, RD 5, Feilding

Delivery sites: As above

Courses currently delivered:

 New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (General Aviation) (Level 5)

 New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Flight Instruction) (Level 6)

 New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Airline Preparation) (Level 6)

Training Schemes:

Private Pilot Licence (Level 4)

Commercial Pilot Licence (Level 5)

Multi-Engine Type Rating (Level 5)

Single or Multi Engine Instrument Rating

Category C Flight Instructor Rating (Level 6)

Code of Practice signatory: Yes

Number of students:

Domestic: 14 EFTS (equivalent full-time students).

Students self-identify as: Māori (one), Pasifika

(one), Pakeha (12)

International: 22 students

Number of staff: 13 full-time and part-time instructors

Three full-time and part-time administration/management

Scope of active accreditation:

Domains and unit standards in Aviation up to, and

including, level 6.

Distinctive characteristics: CPA operates from Feilding Aerodrome in

Manawatu, a privately owned airfield where there

has been a flight school since 1993.

Recent significant changes: This is the first external evaluation and review

(EER) for this entity. Previously, what is

essentially the same organisation was registered and trading as Flight Training Manawatu (MoE # 7540). Flight Training Manawatu was purchased by Commercial Pilot Academy in September 2015 and was re-registered as a PTE under the current

entity at the time.

2012.

For several years, Flight Training Manawatu offered the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT) Diploma in Aviation (Level 6) under a partnership arrangement. This partnership ceased at the end of 2011, at which time Flight Training Manawatu became directly funded by the Tertiary Education Commission. All students enrolled at that time completed the NMIT diploma and Flight Training Manawatu began offering the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation from

Along with direct Tertiary Education Commission funding in 2012, there were changes to the rules governing student loans for study towards aviation qualifications. All students are now required to personally fund approximately \$30,000 of the cost. While CPA and other aviation providers

acknowledge that the change has resulted in the self-selection of the more committed students, it has also led to exclusion of some students who

simply lack sufficient resources.

Previous quality assurance The previous EER (of Flight Training Manawatu),

history: held in April 2014, resulted in summative

judgements of Highly Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-

assessment.

Other: The certification and operation of organisations

conducting aviation training and assessments in New Zealand is prescribed under Part 141 of Civil Aviation Rules governed by the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand (CAA). All theory and practical (flight test) assessments are conducted independently by Aviation Services Ltd, which operates under licence to CAA. All pilot licences

are issued by CAA.

The organisation was last audited by CAA (as Flight Training Manawatu) in September 2013, at which time CPA was found to be compliant with all of the 668 Civil Aviation Rules that were tested

during the audit.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope for the EER consisted of the mandatory focus area:

• Governance, management, and strategy. International student support, was included in this focus area.

In addition, the following focus area was selected:

 New Zealand Diploma in Aviation including all levels and strands delivered by CPA.

The above focus area encapsulates all of the teaching and programme delivery activities of CPA. The New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Level 6) provides flight training up to a Commercial Pilot Licence with an Instrument Rating. In the second year of their training CPA students are split into three streams:

- General aviation stream including GPS, dangerous goods, air operations and aerobatic flight.
- Airline preparation stream including the Airline Transport Pilot Licence theory examinations and a component in the Multi Crew environment.

¹ Traditionally, international students have enrolled for programmes leading to CAA licences, for example Commercial Pilot Licence or Multi Engine Rating, rather than a full diploma.

 Instructor stream – including the qualification required to become a Category C Flight Instructor.

As students from the three streams are taught as individual learning plans within a single cohort, it was considered appropriate to include all activities in the scope.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

The EER was conducted in late February 2016. Prior to the EER, the lead evaluator discussed the visit by telephone and email with the organisation's chief executive and the personnel and compliance officer. The evaluation team of two evaluators spent one and half days at the CPA site at Feilding airport, where they reviewed an extensive range of documentation and met with the chief executive officer, chief flying instructor, ground training manager/deputy chief flying officer, the personnel and compliance officer, student support co-ordinator, two members of the board of directors, two groups of instructors, two groups of students, and two independent advisory board members.

The evaluation team is confident that a sufficient range of staff, stakeholders and students were interviewed for evaluation purposes.

During the site visit, CPA provided the evaluation team with a range of operational documentation, including strategic planning materials, management meeting minutes, quality management policies, enrolment information and policies, student achievement records, student evaluations, collated analysis of student satisfaction levels, and course design, delivery and assessment materials. This documentation complemented the self-assessment information that had been pre-submitted by the organisation. The evaluators reviewed all materials tabled.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Commercial Pilot Academy Limited.**

Key reasons for this judgement include:

- Students at CPA are achieving excellent results (refer Findings 1.1). Course completion in 2015 was 94 per cent for international students and 93 per cent for domestic students.
- Eighty-four per cent of domestic graduates from the last seven years are now working in the aviation industry (refer Findings 1.2). CPA is in regular contact with many of its graduates, and the results indicate that the organisation is preparing students well for employment in the aviation industry.
- CPA and its staff engage well with their industry at a local level and are valued for the positive contribution they make. Since the previous EER, CPA has begun a more systematic engagement approach, especially with employer organisations, which will lead to more useful feedback and stronger links with potential employers of their graduates in the future.
- The EER team found consistent evidence of excellent teaching throughout the organisation brought about by a systematic and deliberate strategy and staff who have received sound training in education delivery (refer Findings 1.4).
- CPA has excellent student support structures which are appropriate to the needs of both international and domestic students and help them to achieve (refer Findings 1.5).

In summary, NZQA is highly confident in the educational performance of CPA as it has found clear and comprehensive evidence that CPA is providing quality education and training that leads to positive outcomes for the majority of its students. The organisation is well managed and has a clear philosophy and purpose that is well operationalised. The training is well resourced and CPA uses its resources effectively. The CPA management team are a professional and cohesive team who display a clear understanding of their role and their respective responsibilities to both the international aviation industry and to their students.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Commercial Pilot Academy Limited**

Key reasons for this judgement include:

- Records indicate that self-assessment has been practised within the
 organisation for many years and that this has been reinforced by the new
 ownership and management structure. CPA has good systems to regularly
 gather and collate feedback from students. Generally, the quality and validity
 of the information collected is sound and the information is then used to inform
 improvements to teaching practice and course structure.
- Since the previous EER, CPA has begun a systematic approach to gathering feedback from industry and graduates and intends to use the information to bring about useful improvements.
- Processes to critically analyse contributing factors to student achievement and
 other quality improvements are taking place across the organisation. Staff at
 CPA demonstrated a good understanding of the factors that lead to student
 achievement. They regularly discuss and assess ideas for improving
 achievement and making the courses more useful and enjoyable for students.
 Engagement with educators outside of the organisation is evident and helps to
 better inform analysis, discussion and engagement, and leads to continuous
 improvements in delivery.
- CPA has followed through on opportunities for improvement identified in their last EER, but still need to fully engage the NZQA key evaluation questions.

In summary, CPA's processes are generally effective in ensuring that industry and student needs are understood and met, and high standards are maintained. Self-assessment at CPA is ongoing, authentic and transparent, and is leading to worthwhile improvements. However, self-assessment processes need to be further embedded into a planned and co-ordinated approach across the organisation to demonstrate excellence.

Findings²

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The students who have studied at CPA have achieved excellent results in the completion of courses and examinations. The 2015 course completion rate is 94 per cent for international students and 93 per cent for domestic students. CPA has benchmarked its course completions against other similar providers. Although CPA is scoring better than other aviation providers, it still aspires to maintain and continuously improve student achievement.

CPA, and many other aviation providers, see an important measure of the success of their training in the number or percentage of 'first-attempt passes³', which they are then able to benchmark against national averages of the first-time pass rates of all New Zealand aviation providers.⁴ CPA has an average flight test pass rate of 75 per cent and a theory class pass rate of 91 per cent. Compared with the sector average, these are very good results.

The organisation has a strong focus on, and commitment to, student achievement. Since 2013 the organisation has developed and implemented systems to provide management, advisory committee members and staff with accurate data of pass rates for both theory and flight tests, to enable staff to fine-tune strategies for sustaining and improving achievement. A dedicated staff member collates this data, and the increased level of awareness of progress among students, instructors and management has assisted CPA to maintain the high levels of student achievement.⁵ Achievement rates for Māori and Pasifika students, albeit small numbers, are on a par with the cohort as a whole.

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ This measure refers to the number or percentage of students who pass external theory or flight test examinations on the first attempt.

⁴ Aviation Services Ltd recently made national average information available to all providers on a quarterly basis.

⁵ Given that all summative assessment is through external examination, CPA does not require a moderation system.

Students are debriefed by their instructor after every flight to identify what the student did well, what he/she did not do so well, and where improvements could be made, either in the student's performance or CPA's instruction. The ground training manager and chief flying instructor regularly conduct interviews with students to review progress and gain feedback on the course. These interviews are also a forum to discuss career aspirations and set goals with students and offer advice on further training and study.

Every student has a student record book, in addition to their log book, which includes achievements and running records. The record book gives students detailed feedback about how they are progressing and provides handover notes when they have a change of flight instructor.

Staff at CPA demonstrated a good understanding of the factors that lead to student achievement and formally and informally analyse and discuss ideas for improving achievement. The instructors have a very collegial approach and all share the same office space, so they are able to communicate and share information informally on a daily basis. CPA also has a compulsory staff meeting every week where the progress and achievement of students is the main topic of conversation.

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is Good.

Forty-two of the 50 CPA/Flight Training Manawatu domestic student graduates from 2009 to 2014 are now in aviation-related employment.

Table 1. Graduate employment 2009-2014 (domestic students), sourced from information supplied by CPA

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Number of graduates	12	13	7	8	8	2	50
Number in aviation- related employment	11	12	5	6	7	1	42
Percentage	92%	92%	71%	75%	87%	50%	84%

This excellent level of graduate employment is due to the focus that CPA has put on preparing graduates for the aviation workforce. CPA considers that the merit of the programme lies not only in the long-term professional outcomes for students but also in attributes such as the professionalism, confidence and positive attitudes the students acquire on the courses. CPA now needs to formalise these characteristics into a graduate profile and determine how they will know whether graduates have actually acquired these attributes.

The immediate outputs from this training are licences and ratings as awarded by CAA, and these also meet the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation. CPA also prepares (Indian) students to sit the Indian Directorate General of Civil Aviation examinations. Students' achievement of these licences and ratings equip them to apply for a range of roles within the aviation industry in their respective home countries.

International students are gaining formal CAA licence qualifications, and those interviewed during this evaluation clearly stated that it was their intention to return to their home countries and gain employment as pilots following graduation. They were confident that they were well prepared to do so. However, accurate employment outcomes for international graduates have been difficult to ascertain. CPA conducts a graduate interview with all international graduates but understandably finds it difficult to systematically follow up with graduates once they return to their home country. However, CPA does keep in touch with international graduates through a variety of social media, informal networks and communications, and has some good anecdotal evidence of the employment successes of many international students in the aviation industry. The evaluators believe that the rates noted in Table 1 are credible. There are also a number of students who, after returning to their home country to complete licence conversions, return to CPA to undertake further advanced training and licences.

The chief executive keeps in regular contact with education and aviation agencies in India to ensure that training is meeting Indian requirements. The chief executive and new board made a visit to India in October 2015 along with the previous chief executive of Flight Training Manawatu, and this has enhanced their understanding of Indian student needs and airline requirements. They intend to continue to visit on a regular basis to build these relationships. During the visit in October 2015 they visited the New Zealand High Commission and talked with representatives from both Education New Zealand and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise to further understand and add value to the outcomes for Indian students.

The information that CPA gains from the engagement with domestic and international students is gathered, analysed and discussed. Analysis is then appropriately used to make any necessary improvements to the programmes and learner support systems. CPA consciously seeks feedback from employers and graduates. As recommended in the last EER, CPA has adopted a formal process for gathering, analysing, discussing and summarising this valuable feedback so that it can be systematically used to make improvements. This process is a 'work in progress' and only just starting to produce results.

CPA adds value to its community by, for instance, hosting school visits; participating in STAR and Gateway programmes for schools; hosting Scouts/Air Training Corps visits; and assisting the local aviation organisation with events. The organisation has also sponsored two of the female instructors to attend the Women's Development Forum of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, a forum that

CPA is also providing sponsorship for as a demonstration of the organisation's commitment to encouraging women into aviation.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

CPA courses are structured to offer three different diplomas to domestic students and various CAA licences for international students. The New Zealand diplomas are also available to international students, but the majority of international students are only interested in gaining specific licences.

The overall delivery structure of training at CPA is designed to enable students to complete the theory component of the qualification simultaneously with their practical flying. CPA has adopted and continued this structure because it engages students well and enables them to immediately apply the theory learned to practical application.

CPA's involvement with outside organisations such as Aviation Services Ltd, CAA, and the Aviation Industry Association informs CPA practice to maintain a high standard of training. These organisations provide valuable feedback on the aviation industry. As previously discussed, CPA has agencies in India who handle the recruitment of students on behalf of CPA and regularly provide advice regarding Indian aviation requirements.

CPA has a newly reconstituted advisory committee comprising both staff members and several prominent industry members, which helps the organisation to ensure it is meeting the needs of industry and learners. Meeting minutes and discussion with individual members indicates that the advisory committee is meeting regularly, functioning well, receiving good information from the organisation, engaging with external stakeholders outside of their group, and engaging with the organisation to provide operational and strategic advice.

CPA has a number of instructors available, representing a range of cultures and languages, and generally seeks to ensure that instructors are matched to the learning styles and needs of individual students. The systematic approach by the teaching staff to identify and meet the individual, personal and academic goals of every student is a strong feature of the organisation.

Student evaluations are conducted to a regular schedule and gather students' feedback on their experiences of different aspects of their programmes, including programme content and delivery, facilities and staff effectiveness. The information is then used to bring about useful improvements to teaching and programme design.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

There was clear evidence of excellent teaching practice at CPA. All the staff interviewed are enthusiastic and passionate about the curriculum and their teaching, and they are well supported by management. Instructors and students relate well to each other. The strong rapport between students and staff and the enthusiasm of staff referred to above was evident from discussions and evaluation survey outcomes. Students liked the open, friendly training style and find their learning activities interesting and challenging. Students have good access to staff outside of formal classes and can make suggestions about improvements. Students noted that the staff were responsive to any concerns or issues raised.

The staff are well qualified with Category B and Category C instructors on permanent staff. In addition to extensive industry and professional experience, and with an obvious natural passion and ability to engage students, all CPA instructors have completed or are studying towards the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training to provide students with effective teaching. This is an excellent example of good practice and CPA management's commitment to educational performance. Staff said it has helped them to move from being instructors to teachers and educators. Staff are also encouraged and financially supported to attend short courses and seminars, both education and aviation related, to further enhance their skills and knowledge.

Monitoring of performance is rigorous. Staff appraisals are completed twice a year and include goal-setting for staff to encourage and support them to further their qualifications. All flight instructors have at least three reviews per year: an annual instructor renewal with an independent qualified examiner; an interview with the chief flying instructor or nominee; and a flight check with the chief flying instructor. CPA has implemented this regime to ensure that staff members are monitored continually during the year to improve the instruction for students. It does not preclude regular and ongoing feedback on a formative basis.

Given that all summative assessment is through external examination, CPA does not require a moderation system. The chief flying instructor does, however, closely monitor examination results and matches these results with the various instructors to identify trends, positive or negative, which may indicate good practice or areas for improvement.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is Good.

CPA has robust and client-friendly systems for the pastoral care of its students. The organisation is providing a safe and supportive learning environment for its students and is in close contact outside of the normal hours of tuition. The small number of students means that they are given individual support. CPA has aspirations to increase the number of international students and has invested in additional staff to provide the student support needed as numbers grows.

There is a designated support staff member with 24-hour phone contact should the students require assistance when away from the site. Accommodation for international students is managed in-house by the international student co-ordinator. The co-ordinator visits all accommodation sites on a regular cycle to inspect and evaluate suitability. CPA has leased and is currently refurbishing a 72-room student hostel in Wanganui which will complement the intended shift of operations to Wanganui in January 2017.

The international student co-ordinator has overall responsibility for ensuring that Code of Practice requirements are met, and staff regularly attend professional development in the code's requirements. The organisation periodically (at least once a year) thoroughly self-reviews its compliance with the code, using the self-review tool provided on the NZQA website.

Pre-enrolment information is comprehensive and designed to ensure that students make an informed decision before committing to a significant personal and financial investment. International students receive a comprehensive orientation programme in their first week of study and have access to staff from a range of cultures who are able to converse with students in several languages if necessary. CPA has possibly the only Arabic-speaking flight instructor in New Zealand. English is the international language of aviation and CPA entry requirements stipulate IELTS (International English Language Testing System) requirements for various levels of training. Nevertheless, some students still require additional English support, which CPA has contracted a specialist to provide.

In line with new rules for the New Zealand aviation industry, CPA has introduced random drug and alcohol testing for all students and staff. One student was recently stood down from flying because of a positive test provided on a Monday morning. CPA supported this student through counselling and lifestyle changes. CPA used this situation positively as a learning exercise for both the organisation and for the student cohort.

CPA has detailed and robust procedures for resolving complaints. Feedback from students was that any complaint or feedback was addressed promptly and appropriately.

1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

The recent transition to new ownership has been well managed and has brought about a positive shift for CPA. Although still privately owned, the organisation is now part of a wider strategy of the Wanganui District Council to create an aviation training hub at Wanganui Airfield. The organisation has a clear set of goals and objectives and has developed and applied effective systems for monitoring student achievement and supporting staff to improve educational achievement, and to help students to meet their employment goals. The board is also working closely with Wanganui iwi to incorporate a Māori cultural component into the programmes and to identify how CPA can better meet the needs of Māori.

CPA employs highly qualified and experienced teaching, management and support staff who it manages effectively and actively develops. The structure and lines of reporting in the organisation are clear. The new board and senior management are highly competent, purposeful and motivated to continue building and sustaining a high-performance organisation.

The organisation is well equipped with physical and learning resources for the number of students that it currently has. There are systems in place to monitor resourcing to ensure there are always sufficient and appropriate resources, mainly aircraft and instructors, to meet the needs of the students and the projected growth. For instance, CPA acquired a Diamond DA20 training aircraft from Flight Training Manawatu. Although these aircraft incorporate the latest technology, the DA20 does not comply with Indian Directorate General of Civil Aviation requirements. Therefore, students wishing to return to India cannot have DA20 hours recognised towards their flying time. CPA has responded by focusing on increasing its Cessna fleet.

Monitoring of performance within the organisation is regular, transparent and robust, and the organisation encourages opportunities for reflection on its role and how to continue to make ongoing and continuous improvements to meeting the needs of students and other stakeholders. Self-assessment is being well led by management and is being embedded throughout the organisation.

Focus Areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent.**

2.2 Focus area: Flight Training

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent.**

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent.**

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from this report

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/.

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